

**Amendments to the Claims**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims**

1-2. (canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a meat product or a processed meat product coated with a film of curdlan gel, comprising the steps of:

applying a first coating of an alkaline aqueous solution of curdlan ~~to a~~ onto the meat product or a the processed meat product; and

exposing the ~~meat product or the processed meat product to~~ first coating to a second, non-curdlan coating, the second coating being configured to complete gelling of the curdlan comprising the first coating~~an aqueous solution of any one of an alkali metal salt and an alkaline earth metal salt to form a complete the~~ film of curdlan gel.

4. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a meat product or a processed meat product coated with a film of curdlan gel, comprising the steps of:

applying a first coating of an alkaline aqueous solution of curdlan ~~to a~~ onto the meat product or a the processed meat product; and

exposing the first coating ~~meat product or the processed meat product to~~ an acid ~~for to~~ neutralize alkalinity of the first coating neutralization to form a complete the film of curdlan gel.

5. (Currently amended) A method for producing a meat product or a processed meat product coated with a film of curdlan gel, comprising the steps of:

applying a coating of an alkaline aqueous solution of curdlan ~~to a~~ onto the meat product or a the processed meat product;

exposing the ~~meat product or the processed meat product~~ coating to an aqueous solution of any one of an alkali metal salt and an alkaline earth metal salt; and

exposing the ~~meat product or the processed meat product~~ coating to an acid ~~for neutralization~~  
to neutralize alkalinity of the coating to form a complete the film of curdlan gel.

6. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 3, further comprising the step of heat-treating the meat product or the processed meat product.

7. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 3, wherein the meat product or the processed meat product is any one of sausage and ham.

8. (New) The method according to claim 3, wherein exposing the first coating to the second, non-curdlan coating comprises exposing the first coating to an aqueous solution of any one of an alkali metal salt, an alkaline earth metal salt and acid.

9. (New) A method for producing a meat product or processed meat product, comprising the steps of:

preparing the meat product or processed meat product,

applying an alkaline aqueous solution of curdlan onto the meat product or processed meat product to form a film of curdlan gel onto the meat product or processed meat product, and

applying, onto the meat produce or processed meat product with the film of the curdlan gel, an aqueous solution of any one of an alkali metal salt, an alkaline earth metal salt and acid to complete the film of the curdlan gel.